

# Crossley Farm

**EPA Region 3**

Pennsylvania

Berks County

Hereford Township

**EPA ID#** PAD981740061

**6th** Congressional District

**Last Update:** August  
2002

**Other Names:**

Hereford Groundwater

## Current Site Status

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency completed the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study reports for the Crossly Farm Site groundwater operable unit in July 2001 and a Record of Decision was signed in September 2001. The agency's cleanup plans for the site will be to extract the most contaminated groundwater from a limited area located at the top of Blackhead Hill and treat the groundwater until it meets drinking water standards. This is only an interim measure. By using a limited number of extraction wells in the "hot spot" at the top of Blackhead Hill, the agency can evaluate the effectiveness of a few wells to decrease concentrations in the groundwater and in the springs down the hill and in the valley. If it is successful, groundwater extraction and treatment could be expanded to include other areas. The agency is currently constructing a system for the remedial extraction and treatment system

## Site Description

The Crossley Farm Site is in Hereford Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania. It spans about 24 acres in a rural area atop Blackhead Hill. From the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s, Bally Case and Cooler, a nearby company, reportedly sent many drums to Crossley Farm for disposal. These drums contained mostly liquid waste and were described as having a distinctive "solvent" odor. Until 1970, Bally Case and Cooler Co. was believed to have used trichloroethylene (TCE) as a degreaser.

A 1983 investigation done by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources (PADER) found contamination in residential wells downhill from the site. These wells were polluted with various volatile organic compounds (VOCs). PADER issued a health advisory, warning residents not to drink from the contaminated wells, and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency provided temporary water supplies for the community.

Continued citizens' complaints led to additional testing. In 1983, EPA testing confirmed that the site was contaminated. A regional study of underground water started in 1987. This study involved building 21 monitoring wells and studying the gasses found in soils. The study found a large area of TCE-contaminated groundwater. The source of it was located near the crest of Blackhead Hill.

More private wells are being affected by site contamination as the plume continues to spread. Public and private wells within four miles of the site supply drinking water to an estimated 4,800 people. The closest private well is less than a mile from Crossley Farm.

### **Site Responsibility**

Cleanup of this site is the responsibility of the Federal and State governments and parties potentially responsible for site contamination.


### **NPL Listing History**

Our country's most serious uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites can be cleaned using federal money. To be eligible for federal cleanup money, a site must be put on the National Priorities List (NPL). This site was proposed to the National Priorities List on July 29, 1991. The site was formally added to the list October 14, 1992, making it eligible for federal

cleanup funds.

## Threats and Contaminants

Our work is ensuring that people have clean and safe water to drink. TCE and other VOCs have been detected in on-site groundwater and residential wells down gradient of Crossley Farm. Consuming contaminated groundwater could pose a health risk.

Contaminant descriptions and associated risk factors are available on the Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry, an arm of the CDC, web site at <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/hazdat.html> 

## Cleanup Progress

The EPA agency has spent more than \$9 million to protect the community from polluted groundwater at this site. This money was used to eliminate the suspected source of the contamination. It also covered the cost of installing and maintaining water treatment systems at individual homes where the water was not safe to drink.

This project is split into two phases. The first stage, described above, is finished. However, the EPA broadened the reach of its efforts to protect drinking water. We installed 43 new treatment systems in the area, and we will check to see if any others are needed.

The second part of the project identified in the September 2001 Record of Decision will be to identify and address contamination groundwater at the source area on top of Blackhead Hill. In addition to the remedial action planned for the contaminated groundwater, EPA continues to monitor and sample more than 150 wells in the vicinity of the Site. These tests are done twice each year.

The agency is currently developing a plan for the remedial design of the extraction and treatment system.

## Contacts

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Detailed public files (Administrative Record) on EPA's actions and decisions for this site can be examined at the following locations:

EPA Region III Docket Room  
1650 Arch Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
215-814-3157

Please call for an appointment

Hereford Township Building  
3131 Seisholtzville Road  
Macungie, PA

Washington Township Building  
128 Barto Road  
Barto, PA 19504